Terminology in Health Care and Public Health Settings

Unit 1a Understanding Medical Words

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Medical Terminology

- Studying medical terminology is like learning a new language
- Basic rules for building terms will help you both build and translate many different words
- You must be able to put words together or build words from their parts
 - Like putting the pieces together of a puzzle

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Understanding Medical Terms It is impossible to memorize all of the thousands of medical terms You can figure out the meaning of many different words by analyzing the word parts Word roots Prefixes Suffixes Combining forms

2

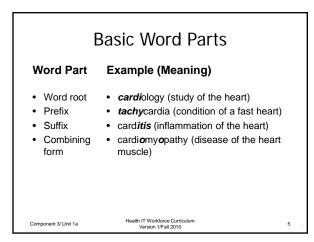
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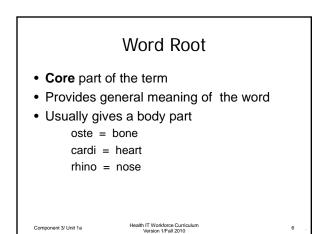
Basic Word Parts

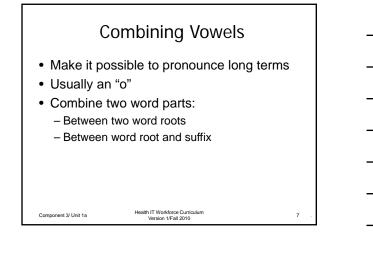
- Word root is the general meaning of the term
- **Prefixes** are added to the beginning of the word.
- Suffixes are added to the ending of the word.
- Combining vowels connect other word parts

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Combining Vowel Rules

- Between word root and suffix
- If the suffix begins with a vowel
 - Do not use a combining vowel
 Arthritis, not arthroitis
- If the suffix begins with a $\ensuremath{\textbf{consonant}}$
 - Use a combining vowel

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- Arthroscope, not arthrscope

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- Combining vowel is typically kept between two word roots
- Even if the second word root begins with a vowel

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- gastroenteritis, not gastrenteritis

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8

9

